

BM2 [REDACTED]

Below is a summary of interview of BM2 [REDACTED] USCG, conducted by the AIM informal board on August 23, 2006 concerning the diving incident which resulted in two deaths on August 17, 2006. AIM board members present at the interview were Captain [REDACTED] LCDR [REDACTED] and LCDR [REDACTED]

BM2 [REDACTED] reported aboard CGC HEALY on [REDACTED] BM2 [REDACTED] is a qualified [REDACTED], and a [REDACTED]. BM2 [REDACTED] previously sailed in CGC CHASE. He was on watch during the dive accident of 17 August.

On 17 August, the JOOD watch was dogged (a normal four hour watch was split into two, two hour watches) so that both crewmembers could partake in ice liberty, and so that BM2 could take care of his duties rigging the brow with slings so personnel could disembark on the ice.

Prior to ice liberty the deck force held a safety brief, led by the BOSN. The BOSN ensured members of the department were assigned specific duties – bear watch, brow riggers, safety personnel, a crane operator, etc. Each duty was briefed with a great deal of emphasis on safety and following procedures. They were instructed that certain positions would not be able to drink beer while on ice liberty, specifically the crane operator and personnel assigned to bear watch and brow safety. Before going out on the ice, members of deck force would place cones in locations approved by the BOSN and XO to keep people in a safe area. Following the brief, the ship was stopped and the deck force began with their assigned duties.

Radios were passed out to key locations, and told to monitor channel 83A. BM2 [REDACTED] spent a little bit of time on ice liberty and consumed one beer. At the end of his off period, he took the second half of the dogged watch on the bridge.

When BM2 [REDACTED] relieved the watch, he remembers the standard pass down – barometer, wx, plant status, etc... The focus of the pass down was to keep an eye out for general safety during ice liberty and keeping comms with the stations on the ice. BM2 [REDACTED] said he was not informed of the specifics of dive operations, and that the bridge did not get much information about the dive side. There was no discussion about tag outs. He recalls trying to hail the dive side, but they did not respond to his radio call – so he assumed they hadn't gone in the water. They did not seem to have a radio. It was starting to get late, and no one was in the water as far as the bridge knew. There was no dive plan on the bridge, no alfa flag flown, no pipe had been made, and BM2 [REDACTED] was not aware of a brief or GAR model being conducted.

BM2 [REDACTED] could not see the dive side from the bridge – either visually or through a television monitor. He could see a few of the scientists who were involved in the polar bear swim, but he could not see the dive team.

ENCLOSURE(981 PAGE 1 OF 2 PAGES.  
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At some point, a call came to the bridge requesting HSC's presence on the ice. That was followed shortly thereafter by a call for stretcher bearers. Both pipes were made. BM2 [REDACTED] was asked to grab a dive manual, and ran to the dive locker and grabbed the only one he could find. It was in the shower, and labeled "NOAA dive manual." He sent it out on the ice. A few minutes later the XO ordered him to ensure that comms were stopped aboard the ship, except for medical personnel.

I helped bring LT Hill onto the ship via the manilla line attached to the stretcher. Then

[REDACTED] BM2 [REDACTED]

ENCLOSURE(98) PAGE 2 OF 2 PAGES.

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